



PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Panhandle's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased from 7.6 percent in June to 8.7 percent in July. Fortunately, much of the unemployment rate increase was caused by temporary factors, including the temporary shutdown of the Galena Mine in the Silver Valley because of a mechanical problem with its hoist, Hoot Owl restrictions on logging and activities that might cause forest fires, and some short-term job losses in the lumber industry. Since lumber prices fell sharply last fall, many mills in the Panhandle have intermittently shut down for short periods of time or otherwise cut employment. About 200 of the 240 jobs lost in *Wood Products Manufacturing* between July 2002 and July 2003 are permanently lost. The other 40 job losses were temporary, resulting from one of the short shutdowns that have been common in recent months.

Three of the Panhandle's five counties are experiencing double-digit unemployment. Benewah and Shoshone Counties have long endured economic stagnation and double-digit unemployment rates, but Boundary County has experienced the pain of double-digit unemployment rates only since the Louisiana-Pacific Mill in Bonners Ferry closed in April. Its July 2003 unemployment rate of 11.4 percent was far higher than its July 2002 rate of 6.8 percent. Benewah County's unemployment rate was 12.2 percent in July 2003, while Shoshone County's unemployment rate was 13.3 percent. Shoshone County's rate may rise higher in August because 80 jobs were lost when the Tele-Servicing Innovation (TSI) call center in Smelterville permanently closed at the end of July.

The Panhandle's two largest counties manage to keep adding jobs. Growth in *Manufacturing*, *Construction*, and *Retail* sectors allowed Bonner County's unemployment rate to edge down from 8.7 percent in July 2002 to 8.5 percent a year later. In Kootenai County, booming residential construction, a strong real estate market, an ever-expanding medical sector, and a strong tourism sector have offset job losses in *Manufacturing*, bringing the unemployment rate from 8.8 percent a year ago to 7.9 percent this July.

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	July 2003*	June 2003	July 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	94,490	93,320	93,310	1.3	1.3
Unemployed	8,260	7,090	8,510	16.5	-2.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.7	7.6	9.1		
Total Employment	86,230	86,230	84,800	0.0	1.7
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	95,980	94,440	94,720	1.6	1.3
Unemployed	6,400	5,780	6,730	10.7	-4.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.7	6.1	7.1		
Total Employment	89,580	88,660	87,990	1.0	1.8
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	72,760	72,080	70,970	0.9	2.5
Goods-Producing Industries	13,670	13,180	13,730	3.7	-0.4
Natural Resources & Mining	1,600	1,480	1,670	8.1	-4.2
Construction	5,290	4,980	5,070	6.2	4.3
Manufacturing	6,780	6,720	6,990	0.9	-3.0
Wood Product Manufacturing	2,680	2,600	2,920	3.1	-8.2
Other Manufacturing	4,100	4,120	4,070	-0.5	0.7
Service-Providing Industries	59,090	58,900	57,240	0.3	3.2
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	13,410	13,150	13,410	2.0	0.0
Wholesale Trade	1,410	1,390	1,400	1.4	0.7
Retail Trade	10,300	10,120	10,360	1.8	-0.6
Utilities	390	390	380	0.0	2.6
Transportation & Warehousing	1,310	1,250	1,270	4.8	3.1
Information	1,200	1,210	1,250	-0.8	-4.0
Financial Activities	3,020	3,010	2,860	0.3	5.6
Professional & Business Services	7,280	7,220	7,120	0.8	2.2
Educational & Health Services	7,120	7,060	6,730	0.8	5.8
Leisure & Hospitality	10,230	9,720	9,650	5.2	6.0
Other Services	2,620	2,460	2,390	6.5	9.6
Government Education	4,180	5,100	3,890	-18.0	7.5
Government Administration	8,880	8,820	8,800	0.7	0.9
Government Tribes	1,150	1,150	1,140	0.0	0.9

* Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Benewah County

- The St. Joe Riverfront Bed & Breakfast—a four-bedroom, year-round lodging establishment—opened in a new building on Shepherds Road in July.

Bonner County

- The Bonner County Economic Development Corporation continues to recruit businesses to Bonner County. In July, Freeze Manufacturing began moving its commercial division from the Spokane Industrial Park to Priest River. Freeze custom-manufactures wooden and upholstered furniture for homes and offices. Initially the Priest River shop, located near the Aerocet plant, will employ five people to make furniture for offices.
- Sandpoint recently welcomed several new businesses including Lakeview Funeral, offering funeral services in an old church at Olive and Superior;

Sandpoint White Cross Pharmacy at Pioneer Square on Highway 2; Full Spectrum Tours, offering kayak tours and kayak equipment for sale and rent at 321 North Second Avenue; an Evergreen Realty office at Schweitzer Mountain Resort; Big Jack Sports Shop, selling an extensive array of fishing gear and soon to be offering hunting supplies at 1223 Michigan Street; Eagle Eye Inspections, a home inspection company; The Eclectic Cuisine Kitchen, a restaurant specializing in Greek and Pacific Northwest cuisine, and a related catering business, A Taste of Idaho Catering, at 116 North Second Avenue.

- Among the town of Kootenai's newest businesses is Admit One Fabric Outlet, offering a large selection of fabrics and craft items.

Boundary County

- Zydecco, okra, and cayenne became staples in Bonners Ferry after the June opening of The Cajun Kitchen Buffet, headed by Chef Bobby LeBuhn. The new restaurant is located in a log cabin-style building that was formerly home to Peaceful Gardens. Over the next few months, a house next to the restaurant will be transformed into the Cajun Caymart, a store that will feature new and used items and consignments.
- A new shop in Bonners Ferry, Spud Press, sells a wide variety of paper and card stock for printing and scrapbooking. It also features a copier and a digital printer. It creates business cards, flyers, wedding invitations, signs, letterheads, graduation announcements, menus, and custom envelopes. Located at 6858 South Main, the 870-square-foot shop also publishes the weekly *Bonners Ferry Brief*, which contains many jokes, a community calendar, news items, and advertisements. Owner Marcia Morman also owns the original Spud Press in Sandpoint.

Kootenai County

- Rathdrum recently welcomed The LogCabin Bakery, specializing in European baked goods, in the Stein's IGA Center at 6594 North Highway 41; One-Eyed Jack's Steak House, a restaurant at 15512 Highway 41 North; and the Rathdrum Clinic, offering the services of family practitioner Dr. Michael Whiting and massage therapist Sue Whiting, at 14775 Kimo Court.
- Coeur d'Alene's newest businesses include Coeur d'Alene Spine & Brain PLLC, a neurosurgical practice at 700 Ironwood Drive; an Elmer's Restaurant in the former Village Inn building at 300 West Neider Avenue; Preferred Technologies, a supplier of tools, cable, and equipment to telephone and cable TV companies that recently moved from Oregon and now is located at 701 North 4th Street; coiNuts, which buys and sells coins, bullion, and jewelry made of precious metals at 296 West Sunset Avenue; Ristorante Marguerite, a restaurant specializing in Cajun and Italian cuisine at 206 North Fourth Street; and Zizzlyzaza Bead & Embellishment Emporium, which sells beads of all kinds at 613 West Appleway.

- Hayden recently welcomed these new businesses: Hancock Fabrics at 301 West Prairie Avenue; Old Glory Flag & Pole, selling flagpoles and American, state, military, and other flags, as well as windsocks, scarves, pennants, and shirts with flags on them at 7721 North Government Way; Mountain View Cycling & Fitness, which sells, repairs, and maintains bicycles at 9521 Government Way; and Fairway Grocery & Gas, a 2,400-square-foot convenience store at the corner of Kathleen and Ramsey. Hayden Lake welcomed Coeur d'Alene Cart Service, which sells, rents, and services golf carts at 105 West Miles Avenue.
- Post Falls is home to these new businesses: Re/Max Results, a real estate office at 1710 East Seltice; Jump Start Java, a drive-through coffee stand offering delivery at Cedar Street and Seltice Way; and a Wendy's Old-Fashioned Hamburgers restaurant at 3939 East Central Avenue.

Shoshone County

- In mid-August, the Galena Mine near Silverton recalled workers from a month-long shutdown caused by failure of its hoist. At that time, the Galena notified 26 miners that they would not be returning to work. The resulting cost-cutting will help the mine's owner, Coeur d'Alene Mines Corp., to realize its plans to renew exploration and development efforts, which low silver prices forced it to discontinue two years ago. Over the next three years, Coeur d'Alene Mines plans to spend \$14 million on exploration and development at the Galena. Following the August layoff, the mine employs slightly fewer than 200 workers. It remains the larger of the two major mines still operating in the Silver Valley.
- Ted and Kristi Beamis, owners of the Sinclair station and the Conoco Super Stop in Wallace, recently purchased the Conoco Super Stop at 119 North Hill Street in Kellogg, the Cameron Conoco at 3 East Cameron Avenue in Kellogg, the Conoco Super Stop at 509 North Division Street in Pinehurst, and the Gondolier, a convenience store selling Chevron gasoline at 802 West Cameron Avenue in Kellogg. Two of the stores have been closed for more than two years. The Beamises reopened the Hill Street Super Stop in July, and currently are renovating the Gondolier.
- Home Away from Home, a new daycare, seeks to provide children under its care with what its name indicates. The daycare at 415 Seventh Street in Wallace offers a wide variety of activities for children 18 months and up.

Kathryn Tacke, Regional Labor Economist
 1221 W. Ironwood Drive, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
 (208) 769-1558 ext. 340
 E-mail: ktacke@jobservice.us